BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

Issue: 02-43 6 Pages
October 25, 2002

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

The Economy

- **Wholesale trade in British Columbia rose 2.8% (seasonally adjusted) in August on a monthly basis, and sales were up 9.1% from August 2001, the largest gain of the ten provinces.** The August monthly increase in BC was due to growth in trade in the food products, computer, packaged software and other electronic equipment, and lumber and building materials sectors. Canadian wholesalers have seen an increase in sales since July (+1.1%), and their year-over-year sales have climbed 5.6%. Saskatchewan (+5.3%) and Ontario (+2.0%) also experienced strong growth since July while trade in Manitoba (-5.2%) and Nova Scotia (-2.7%) declined. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Sales by retailers in the province remained fairly constant in August, inching down 0.1% (seasonally adjusted) after falling (-1.1%) in the previous month.** Nunavut (+4.2%) and Yukon (+1.2%) experienced the largest gains while retail trade in Northwest Territories (-0.9%) and Saskatchewan (-0.5%) declined the most. Nationally, consumer spending in retail stores increased 0.2% to $25.7 billion in August, reversing a 0.2% drop in the previous month.
Source: Statistics Canada

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate inched up 0.1 percentage point, to 1.8%, in September.** Shelter costs continued to fall below last year's prices (-0.4%) for the sixth month in a row. Clothing and footwear (-1.4%) were also cheaper than last year.

  Smokers continued to feel the effects of tobacco tax increases, which have left tobacco prices up 31.2% over September 2001. Food (+2.0%) and health and personal care products (+2.2%) continued to be up from last year. Transportation costs grew 2.6% since August 2001, largely because of higher ticket prices for public transit.

  BC's inflation rate was slightly lower than the national average (+2.3%) in September mainly due to the increased cost of shelter in the country as a whole (+1.1%). For the second straight month, clothing and footwear (-0.6%) was the only major component of the CPI that was less expensive than last year at the national level.
Source: Statistics Canada

- **PEI (+3.9%), and Nova Scotia (+3.4%) endured the highest price increases since September of last year.** Yukon (+0.3%) and Manitoba (+1.2%) experienced the least inflation. Among metropolitan areas, Saint John (+3.9%) and Charlottetown (+3.7%) experienced the most drastic inflation. The price level in Victoria (+2.3%) grew more than the province as a whole since August 2001. *Source: Statistics Canada*

The Census

- **British Columbia had one of the lowest proportions in the nation of couples with children at home (41%) according to the 2001 Census.** This is a significant decrease since the 1996 census, when 44% of total families had at least one child under age 25 living in their home. The proportion of couples with no children in this age group living at home remained unchanged at 43%. Of the 1,086,035 families counted in the census, 73% of the couples were married, down from 76% in 1996. The proportion of common law couples grew from 10% to 11% during the same period. Nunavut had the lowest proportion of married families (43%) while Newfoundland

Report **Where Do the Young and Old Live?**

Did you know...
Of all regional districts in the province, Capital has the lowest proportion of young people, less than 20 years of age, in its population.

and Labrador (75%) had the highest. There were 168,420 single-parent families in British Columbia accounting for 16% of those surveyed. Alberta (14%) had the lowest proportion of single-parent families while Nunavut (26%) had the highest. The number of households in British Columbia in which only one person was living (27%) grew to outnumber households with four or more people (24%). Victoria (32%) had the third highest proportion of one-person households of all metropolitan areas in the whole country. Only the Quebec cities of Sherbrooke (34%) and Trois-Rivières (33%) had a larger proportion.

There were more than twice as many senior women aged 65 and older (35%) living alone than there were senior men (17%) in British Columbia. Most senior men (63%) lived with a spouse or partner while only 39% of senior women lived under these circumstances. Only 29% of senior women and 17% of senior men aged 85 and over lived in health care institutions in British Columbia. This was the lowest in the country, with the national average for women and men at 35% and 23% respectively.

British Columbia had among the highest proportion of same-sex common-law couples at 0.6% of all couples. Yukon and Quebec also had 0.6%, while Newfoundland and Labrador (0.1%) had the lowest proportion. Vancouver (0.9%) and Ottawa-Gatineau (0.9%) had the largest proportion of same-sex couples of all metropolitan areas.

The proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 who live with their parents has increased in every province and territory since the 1981 census. Over half (50.9%) of people in this age group in Newfoundland and Labrador live with their parents. British Columbia (40.2%) fell just below the national average (41.1%). Saskatchewan (29.8%) had the lowest number of young adults living with their parents. Toronto (54.0%) had the highest proportion of all metropolitan areas with Vancouver (45.7%) falling not too far behind. Victoria (30.0%) had significantly less than the provincial average.

Source 2001 Census of Canada

University Enrolment

- **A total of 54,218 students were enrolled full-time at British Columbia's universities during the 1999/2000 school year.** This was slightly higher (+0.3%) than the previous year's enrolment. There was a more substantial increase (+5.7%) in the number of part-time students to 21,384 during this school year. Between 1995/96 and 1999/2000, the number of women enrolled full-time has increased 13.3% while the number of men has increased by 4.8%. There are more females than males enrolled in full-time university in each province, and the gap continued to grow in most provinces in 1999/2000.

  Alberta (+3.8%) had the largest increase in the number of full-time students enrolled at a university, while both Nova Scotia (-3.1%) and New Brunswick (-2.7%) experienced the sharpest declines. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Radio Listening

- **British Columbia residents listened to the radio the least in the country during the fall of 2000, averaging 18.5 hours per week.** Men aged 50-64 listened more than any other age group, while for women, seniors aged 65 and older were the most frequent listeners. For both sexes, people aged 12 to 17 were the least interested in the radio, averaging only 10.4 hours. People listening to English radio in Quebec tuned in the most in the country, an average of 22.4 hours per week. *Source: Statistics Canada*

National

- **The composite leading indicator grew for the fourteenth straight month in September (+0.2%).** The growth was attributable to gains in housing and manufacturing outweighing losses in the stock market. Excluding the stock market, the index increased 0.5%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

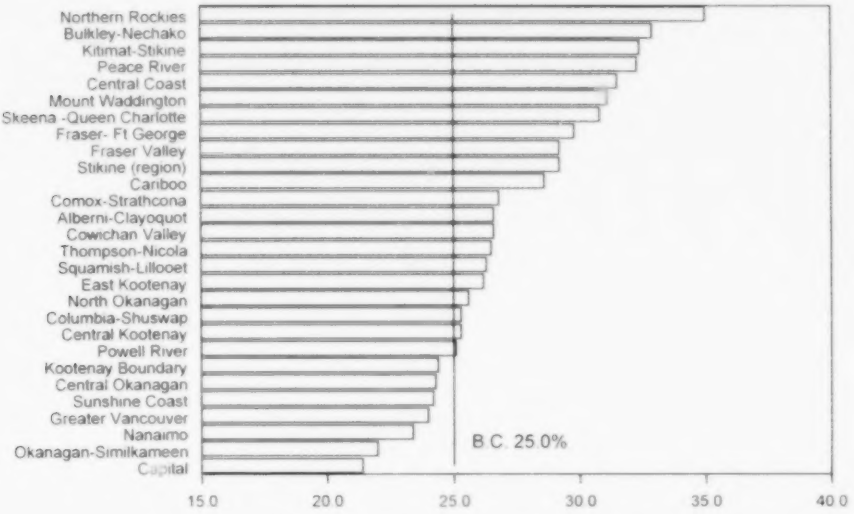
highlights, Issue 02-43
October 25, 2002

Oct. 25, 2002 *Infoline Report:* **Where Do the Young and Old Live?**

Contact: Ruth McDougall, (250) 387-0337
Originally published in *Migration Highlights*, Second Quarter 2002. Annual Subscription $30 + GST.

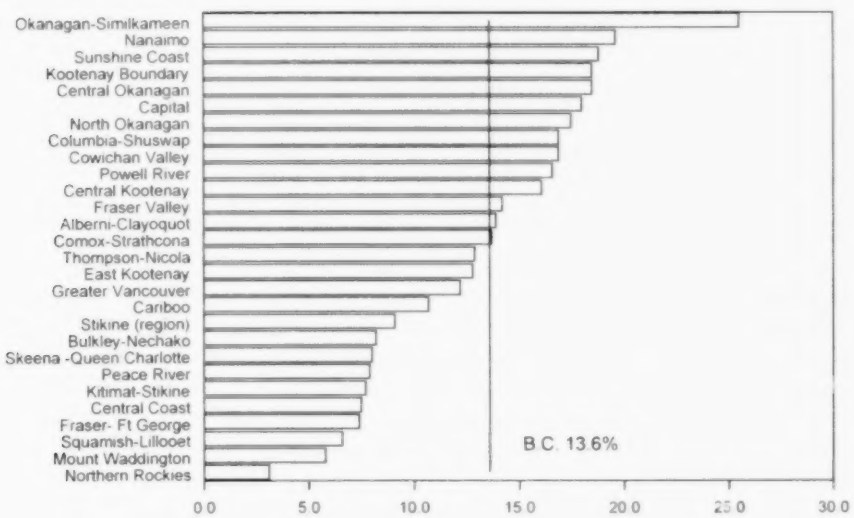
Where Do the Young and Old Live?

Higher proportions of young people live in the northern parts of the province...



2001 share of population aged less than 20 years

...while the Okanagan and Vancouver Island are home to larger shares of seniors.



2001 share of population aged 65 years and over

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The population of the province is generally aging, as the number of births declines and life expectancy increases. As this aging occurs, the contribution of natural increase (births less deaths) to population growth will become less important while growth from migration, especially from other countries, will become a more dominant factor. Since migrants tend to be younger than the resident population, they act to slow the aging process to a certain degree. Some areas of the province receive few migrants and are mainly dependent on natural increase for their growth, while other regions attract many migrants. The information recently released from the 2001 Census gives us a current snapshot of the age structure of the population in different parts of the province and shows the combined effects of these factors.

Between 1996 and 2001, the provincial population grew by 4.9%. However, the growth was all in the 45 and older age groups, with the older working-age population (ages 45–64) increasing 21% and seniors (ages 65 and over) increasing 12%. The very old population (aged 85 and over) expanded by one third. Over the last five years, the younger working-age population (ages 20–44) actually declined by 3%, while the population under 20 decreased slightly. These different growth patterns resulted in the older working-age group increasing from 22% of the population to 25% between 1996 and 2001. The seniors share increased by almost one percentage point to 13.6% of the population, while the younger working-age group declined to 36% of the population and young people decreased to 25%. The median age[1] of the population increased by 2.5 years over the 5 year period, reaching 38.4 in 2001.

Despite the increase in the proportion of seniors in British Columbia, four other provinces had larger shares. Saskatchewan with 15.1% seniors topped the list, followed by Manitoba, Nova Scotia and PEI. Only Quebec (24.2%) and New Brunswick (24.8%) had a smaller share of young people than British Columbia.

[1] Median age is the point where exactly one-half of the population is older and the other half is younger.

It is worth noting that the use of age 64 as the upper limit to the working age population is for convenience. In fact, the age at which people move from working to being retired has become more variable.

Regional Districts

Which parts of the province have the largest concentration of the different age groupings? The patterns are quite different between the northern and southern parts of the province, as factors such as the availability of different types of jobs, services required by different age groups, climate and so on play a role in the suitability of an area for people of different ages.

Among the 28 regional districts Okanagan-Similkameen is the one with the largest share of seniors (25.5% of its population), followed by Nanaimo and Sunshine Coast. At the other extreme, only 3% of Northern Rockies population, 6% of Mount Waddington and 7% of Squamish-Lillooet are seniors. The distribution of the work-

2001 Age Structure

	Per Cent			
Regional District	**<20**	**20-44**	**45-64**	**65+**
Alberni-Clayoquot	26.6	31.6	27.8	13.9
Bulkley-Nechako	32.9	36.1	22.9	8.2
Capital	21.4	34.4	26.2	18.0
Cariboo	28.6	33.5	27.2	10.7
Central Coast	31.5	37.3	23.5	7.5
Central Kootenay	25.3	30.4	28.2	16.1
Central Okanagan	24.3	32.1	25.1	18.5
Columbia-Shuswap	25.3	30.3	27.4	16.9
Comox-Strathcona	26.8	31.8	27.7	13.7
Cowichan Valley	26.6	29.7	26.7	16.9
East Kootenay	26.2	33.2	27.7	12.8
Fraser- Ft George	29.8	38.2	24.5	7.4
Fraser Valley	29.2	34.4	22.2	14.2
Greater Vancouver	24.0	39.4	24.4	12.2
Kitimat-Stikine	32.4	35.8	24.1	7.7
Kootenay Boundary	24.4	28.7	28.4	18.5
Mount Waddington	31.1	36.7	26.5	5.8
Nanaimo	23.4	29.4	27.6	19.6
North Okanagan	25.6	30.3	26.6	17.5
Northern Rockies	35.0	43.6	18.2	3.1
Okanagan-Similkameen	22.0	25.7	26.9	25.5
Peace River	32.3	38.5	21.4	7.9
Powell River	25.1	29.2	29.0	16.6
Skeena -Queen Charlotte	30.8	36.4	24.7	8.0
Squamish-Lillooet	26.3	45.8	21.3	6.6
Stikine (region)	29.2	33.0	29.2	9.1
Sunshine Coast	24.2	26.9	30.0	18.8
Thompson-Nicola	26.5	33.9	26.8	12.9
British Columbia	**25.0**	**36.3**	**25.1**	**13.6**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada, 95F0486XCB01001
Prepared by: BC STATS

ing-age population differs quite dramatically between the 45–64 and 20–44 age groups. Sunshine Coast, Stikine and Powell River have around 30% of their population in the older group, while Northern Rockies has only 18% of its population in this group, followed by Peace River and Squamish-Lillooet with 21%. On the other hand, Squamish-Lillooet and Northern Rockies have around 45% of their population in the younger working-age group, while Okanagan-Similkameen and Sunshine Coast have about 26% of their population in the younger group.

Northern Rockies has the largest share (35%) of young people under 20, followed by other northern parts of the province—Bulkley-Nechako, Kitimat-Stikine and Peace River. Capital and Okanagan-Similkameen, have around 22% of their population under the age of 20.

Municipalities

At the time of the 2001 Census there were 154 incorporated municipalities[2] in the province. Municipalities range in size from the City of Vancouver with over half a million people to municipalities that have a population of less than 1,000. The following information will generally relate to places with more than 1,000 people.

There are a number of municipalities that have traditionally had high concentrations of seniors. This has not changed dramatically in 2001 but Qualicum Beach, with 38% of its population 65 years of age and over, has continued to top the list of places with the largest proportion of seniors. The median age increased to a remarkable 58.1 years. In 2001 Osoyoos, Keremos, Oliver, Sidney, Parksville and White Rock also have more than 30% of their population in the senior ranks. At the other extreme, Whistler, Mackenzie, Pemberton and Fort Nelson all have less than 3% of their population in the senior group.

Although a number of small communities have larger shares of their population between the ages of 45 and 64, North Saanich with 36% and West Vancouver with 31% also have significant numbers of people in this age group. All municipalities in the province have at least 12% of their population aged 45 to 64 and as the baby boomers age, the relative size of this group will continue to grow.

The large share of people in the younger working-age group in Squamish-Lillooet and Northern Rockies regional districts noted above reflects the dominance of this age group in Whistler (63%), Pemberton (60%) and Fort Nelson (46%). The resort nature of Whistler gives it and the neighbouring community of Pemberton very different age profiles than other places.

A number of northern communities have the highest proportion of children: Telkwa (36%), Fort Nelson, New Hazelton and Chetwynd (34%). Communities with relatively few children are in many cases those with a large share of seniors, such as White Rock, Osoyoos and Qualicum Beach.

Data on mobility and migration, which will be available in December 2002, will provide information on how these factors have influenced population growth and the age structure of different parts of the province.

2001 Age Structure

Municipality	Per Cent <20	20-44	45-64	65+
Oldest				
Qualicum Beach	15.5	16.0	30.5	**38.1**
Osoyoos	14.7	18.4	29.6	**37.3**
Keremeos	18.3	20.0	25.0	**36.7**
Oliver	21.6	21.7	23.7	**33.1**
Sidney	18.2	24.2	25.0	**32.6**
Parksville	20.8	23.3	25.1	**30.8**
White Rock	13.6	27.6	28.2	**30.6**
Burns Lake	**33.0**	36.6	19.2	11.3
Mackenzie	**33.0**	41.7	22.9	2.4
Anmore	**33.1**	38.0	24.1	4.9
Chetwynd	**33.5**	43.2	17.5	5.8
New Hazelton	**33.6**	37.5	20.4	8.6
Fort Nelson	**34.4**	45.6	17.1	2.9
Telkwa	**35.8**	39.5	19.6	5.2
Youngest				
British Columbia	**25.0**	**36.3**	**25.1**	**13.6**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada, 95F0486XCB01001
Prepared by: BC STATS

[2] Since the 1996 Census three new municipalities have been formed, Wells in Cariboo Regional District, Sooke in Capital Regional District and Bowen Island in Greater Vancouver Regional District.

Infoline

October 25, 2002

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/02	% change on one year ago
BC	4,141.3	1.0
Canada	31,414.0	1.0
GDP and INCOME		
(BC - at market prices)	2001	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	130,396	2.2
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	125,534	0.9
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	30,648	-0.1
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	19,177	0.8
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Aug	2,909	3.8
Merchandise Exports (raw) Jul	2,440	-4.8
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Aug	3,332	4.8
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		
(all items - 1992=100)	Sep '02	% change on one year ago
BC	118.8	1.8
Canada	120.1	2.3
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Sep '02	% change on one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,180	4.1
Employed - BC	2,003	3.8
Unemployed - BC	178	8.0
		Sep '01
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.1	7.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.7	7.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Oct 23/02	Oct 24/01
Prime Business Rate	4.50	4.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.30	4.90
- 5 year	7.00	6.90
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Oct 23/02	Oct 24/01
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.5687	1.5745
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.6385	0.6355
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Sep '02	% change on one year ago
BC	668.84	3.6
Canada	654.18	2.3

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

New on our site

The Profile of the High Technology Sector – 2002 is part of an ongoing project to monitor the growth and evolution of the high technology sector in British Columbia. This publication evaluates the economic contribution of the sector, covering the GDP, revenue, employment, wages, exports, etc. generated by firms in selected high technology industries. The latest edition contains information up to the end of 2001, and is based on the new "NAICS" system of industrial classification.

Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector – 2002 is the third annual report prepared by BC STATS in conjunction with the Science, Technology and Telecommunications Division to assess conditions that affect the growth of the high technology sector in British Columbia. This report tracks thirty-two business and economic climate indicators for the province, and provides comparisons to other provinces for twenty-eight of them. The indicators cover key aspects of the educational, business, government, external, and labour sectors from the point of view of their impact on high technology firms. The indicators, which might be termed "input" measures, are chosen for their relevance and general acceptance, as well as their availability on an ongoing basis. This is the ideal companion volume to the Profile of the High Technology Sector, providing the background behind the latest economic developments in high technology in the Province.

Released this week by BC STATS

- Labour Force Statistics, September 2002

Next week

- Business Indicators, October 2002
- Current Statistics, October 2002
- Exports, August 2002

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